

June 3, 2010

Justin Olsen
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Case #26502191
Insurance ID: 959103757

Hi, my name is Justin Olsen. I would like to appeal the decision made by Qualis Health on May 11, 2010-a denial for a TMJ prosthetic joint replacement.

My wife has composed this letter for me because sometimes I do not think clearly enough to remember everything and put it on paper the way it needs to be done.

I would like to start off by telling you how I came to this diagnosis and ask you to please reconsider your decision.

In August 2007, I was diagnosed with a benign brain tumor which was causing headaches and impairing my vision. The tumor was promptly removed by the military doctors at Madigan Army Hospital in Seattle, but within weeks of the surgery, I was left with constant face pain, jaw pain, and headaches. I researched many different things and saw many doctors to find out the problem, and until now have come up empty handed. I have recently been to the Mayo Clinic in Arizona where they diagnosed the headaches as migraines (which I have been on several medications for and they do not work) but they did not address the face pain or the jaw pain. I have seen acupuncturists, chiropractors, and had physical-therapy through the military. I currently practice somatic exercises and biofeedback to try to relax my jaw. I occasionally use a TENS unit on my jaw, icy hot at night and a night guard, all with little to no relief.

My neurosurgeon and neurologist are sure that the remainder of the tumor are not the cause of my pain and do not know what the problem could be. I have had spinal fluid and blood test to rule out other problems. Everything comes back normal.

My jaw seemed to be where most of the pain came from, so I found someone in Fairbanks to do a cat scan, Dr. Craig O'Donahue. When he looked at the cat scan he automatically said I needed surgery, so he did a mold of my teeth, which sit quite crooked, and we sent the information to Dr. Larry Wolford in Texas. We were told he was the best and we would be in good hands. He also said that the my tumor surgery kept my mouth propped open for 5 1/2 hours probably accelerated a problem that may have come about eventually...

After looking at the teeth molds and seeing one side didn't touch and the cat scans, he told us that he thinks it is possible that I have no cartilage left on that side of my jaw and have severe bone deterioration and that the prosthetic joint replacement could relieve my symptoms. He did, however, decide to try another medication first, Klonopin, which I have been on for three months. It helps me sleep, but does not relieve pain. I have also been on several other medications in the last 2 1/2 years, prescribed by my neurologists such as:

EXHIBIT 6
Page 1 of 2

Amitriptyline, Noritriptyline, Indomethacin, Gabapentin, Topamax, Tegretol, Immitrex. All these medications were tried for a period of three months or longer with little to no relief. I have also been on a number of over the counter medications that no longer work to relieve the pain such as Ibuprofen, Tylenol, Excedrin, Aleve, etc. I take Vicodin or Percoset in half doses if the pain gets severe, but it only takes the edge off. I am afraid that eventually one of these medications will cause long term damage or worse, kill me.

If you refer back to my records for the last 2 years, you will see that I, along with the insurance company, have spent thousands of dollars looking for an answer, and before that money out of my pocket with no insurance.

Imagine having constant pain 24/7 and the only relief being sleep. My quality of life has suffered drastically in the last 2 ½ years along with my wife and 2 daughters, who are greatly affected by my moods. The pain is mild and depressing some days and severe others. The risk of the surgery not working is a risk I am willing to take. I am asking you to please pay for this surgery so that I might at least have a chance at a normal life.

Thank you for your consideration and time,

Justin Olsen

We would also like to speak with the board when the appeal comes up so please call:

907-590-6569 or 907-490-2417

EXHIBIT 6
Page 1 of 2